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OF THE

WHITE PAPER

ISSUED BY

THE NORWEGIAN GOVERNMENT
ON APRIL 14th, 1940

THE GERMAN AGGRESSION ON NORWAY

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The German Aggression on Norway.

On the 9th April, 1940, at 5 a.m. the German Minister in Oslo, Dr. Bräuer, came to the Norwegian Ministry for Foreign Affairs and presented to the Minister, Professor Koht, a number of demands from his Government.

Several hours before these demands were presented, German forces had already attacked Norway. About midnight it was learned that foreign warships had passed Faerder and had entered the Oslo Fjord; and three-quarters of an hour later a report was received that an exchange of fire took place between these warships and the Norwegian forts of Bolaerne and Rauer. About 2 a.m. it was learned that five large German warships had passed the outer fortifications at Bergen. At 3.30 a.m. it was reported that two warships had passed Agdenes and had entered the Trondheim Fjord. At the same time the warships that had entered Oslo Fjord—four large warships and a number of smaller ones, reached Filtvedt and soon afterwards fighting began between these warships and the coastal forts at Oskarsborg. Fighting was thus already in full swing and began also immediately after this outside Bergen.

As already stated, it was at this time that the German Minister in Oslo presented his demands to the Norwegian Government. He handed to the Norwegian Minister for Foreign Affairs a memorandum which stated that while Great Britain and France in the war with Germany had also consistently attacked the neutral countries, Germany, on the contrary, still tried to defend the rights of neutral countries. The German Government had now received documents which proved that England and France had agreed to extend the war to the territory of neutral countries, i.e., by occupying Narvik and other places in Norway. He further stated that the German Government had undeniable proof that this occupation would occur within a few days, and the German Government was of the opinion that the Norwegian Government would not resist such occupation. It was further stated in the memorandum that even if the Norwegian Government decided to resist the British and French troops, it would not be strong enough to succeed in this resistance. The German Government would under no circumstances allow the Western Powers to make Scandinavia a battlefield against

Germany, or permit the Norwegian people, directly or indirectly, to be used in the war against Germany. The German Government would not wait for the execution of such a plan without taking any action, and had therefore to-day begun certain military operations to occupy strategically important places in Norway. Germany thereafter would take over for the duration of this war the defence of the Kingdom of Norway. The German Government did not desire this development and England and France were alone responsible for it. These two States pretended hypocritically that they would protect the small countries, but in reality they used violence against them, hoping thereby to pursue the destructive war they have directed against Germany and daily proclaimed always more intensively. German troops had therefore not landed in Norway as enemies. The German High Command did not intend to use bases of operation in Norway for an attack against England, if it were not compelled to do so by England and France, as these military operations were only intended to secure Norway against the planned occupation of Norwegian bases with Anglo-French forces. The German Government felt convinced that by this action they also served the interests of the Northern countries, for the security offered the Scandinavian countries by the German military forces was to them the only guarantee that their countries would not become a battlefield and a theatre for, may be, the most terrible warfare. The German Government therefore expected that the Norwegian Government and the Norwegian people would accept the German action with full understanding and would not resist it. Every resistance would be crushed with all means by the German troops and would therefore only result in a completely useless bloodshed. The Norwegian Government was therefore asked hurriedly to take all steps to secure that the advance of the German troops could take place without friction and difficulties. In conformity with the old-established German-Norwegian relations the German Government declared that Germany by their action neither at present nor in the future had the intention to attack the integrity and political independence of the Kingdom of Norway.

Together with this memorandum followed a so-called "Note," which contained a list of those measures which the German Government asked the Norwegian Government to adopt immediately, viz.:

1. The Norwegian Government should issue a proclamation to the people asking them not to resist the German troops during the occupation.
2. The Norwegian Government should order the Army to make contact with the German troops and make the necessary agreements for loyal co-operation with the German officers in command. The Norwegian soldiers should retain their weapons if their conduct made this possible. As a sign of their willingness to co-operate a

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white flag of truce should be hoisted next to the national flag on all military establishments approached by the German troops. Further liaison-officers should be sent :

(a) to the Commander of the German troops that entered into the capital (officers from the Army, the Navy and the Air Force) and

(b) to the local Commanders.

On the other hand the German Commander in Chief would send liaison-officers to the Norwegian High Command. These liaison-officers should secure a frictionless co-operation and hinder encounters between German and Norwegian troops.

3. Military establishments and fortifications which German troops needed in order to secure the country against enemies, especially coastal fortifications, should be handed over undamaged to the German troops.

4. Exact documents relating to sea minings laid by the Norwegian Government should be revealed to the German troops.

5. In order to secure the air defence a complete black-out of Norwegian districts should be carried out from the evening after the first day of the occupation.

6. All means of communication and intercourse and all intelligence services should be maintained undamaged. The means of communication (the railways, the internal shipping, the coastal trade) and the intelligence centres were to be controlled by the German occupation-troops to such an extent as might be necessary for the action of the German troops and for their supplies.

7. Warships and merchant ships should be forbidden to leave for abroad, and aeroplanes to start, but it was possible that shipping with German ports and neutral Baltic ports would become free.

8. Norwegian sea pilots should receive orders to continue in service with the German authorities, and the lighthouse establishments along the Norwegian coast should submit to orders from the German authorities.

9. The meteorological service must be maintained and placed at the disposal of the German occupation-troops, but all publication of weather bulletins must cease. All intelligence and postal services for abroad should be banned.

10. The intelligence and mail service to all Baltic States must go through certain centres and be under the censorship of the German Command of the occupation-troops.

11. The Press and radio stations must be ordered to publish military news only with the consent of the German Army authorities, and all radio stations should be at the disposal of the German Command for broadcasting of their announcements.

12. The export of all goods required in wartime from Norway to foreign countries must be forbidden.

13. The issue of all proclamations and orders which would be made in accordance with the above paragraphs, should in the case of wireless telegrams only be made in a code not known to Germany's enemies. The decision, whether open messages over the radio stations could be released, would rest with the Commander in Chief of the occupation-troops.

When the Foreign Minister had examined the German memorandum with the special demands attached thereto, he declared that Dr. Bräuer must naturally understand that he alone was not able to take any decision on such an important matter, but would have to present the demands at least to the Government. Dr. Bräuer replied that the decision must be taken urgently, because the German action had already advanced so much, that if it was to be stopped, the German demands must immediately be accepted. He said that the German fleet had orders to occupy a number of Norwegian cities before 9 a.m. or 10 a.m.

Professor Koht said that it would not take a long time for the Government to decide, since the Government was already assembled at the Foreign Office. The Government had been there during the whole night after the German attack had begun.

Dr. Bräuer then agreed that the demands should be submitted to the Government, but pointed out the urgency of the matter.

When Professor Koht had informed the Government of the contents of the German proposals or demands, they very quickly decided that no independent country could accept such demands. Professor Koht then informed the German Minister of his Government's decision and reminded him of a statement recently made by the German Führer, that a people who humbly submitted to an aggressor without the slightest resistance did not deserve to exist. And we, continued Professor Koht, will maintain and defend our independence.

The decision was thus taken and the German attack was made within the following few hours. King Haakon, the Crown Prince, the Crown Princess, the Government and the Storting found themselves compelled to leave Oslo already in the morning to avoid capture by the Germans and to avoid a breakdown in the machinery of the Norwegian Government. The Storting met at Hamar on the same day and was there informed of all the latest events. The Government informed the Storting that they placed their mandates at the disposal of the Storting and King Haakon. But the Storting unanimously decided to ask the Government to remain in power. The Government was at the same time empowered to add to their number three consultative ministers.

The proceedings were interrupted in the evening when it was reported that a German detachment was on its way towards Hamar, and the Storting then moved to Elverum.

At Elverum a telegram was received inquiring whether King Haakon would receive in audience Minister Bräuer, in order to discuss certain proposals. Dr. Bräuer declared himself willing to come either during the night or on the following day. The Storting then decided to appoint a delegation who might discuss with Dr. Bräuer the proposals he might put forward. A delegation of four members was elected, including the Foreign Minister, Professor Koht, M. Ivar Lykke, M. Joh. Ludw. Mowinkel and M. Jon Sundby, the last three delegates being members of the Storting.

The Storting thereupon terminated its proceedings and its members were able to leave.

During the night it was reported that the above-mentioned German detachment now was proceeding towards Elverum, and the members of the Government, with the exception of the Foreign Minister, then left this place. Dr. Bräuer had been informed that King Haakon was ready to receive him the following day, April 10th at 11 a.m., a time that was later altered to 1 p.m. For various reasons Dr. Bräuer did not reach Elverum till 3 p.m.

The attacks made on Elverum were then repulsed, with the result that King Haakon was able to return to this place and receive Dr. Bräuer.

During the conversations that followed, first between King Haakon and Dr. Bräuer and thereupon between these two in the presence of the Foreign Minister, the German Minister declared that the situation was now so altered that the demands presented in the memorandum the previous day could no longer satisfy the German Government. The German Government must now demand the creation of a new Government, in which Germany could have confidence, making possible an amicable collaboration between Norway and Germany. With reference to the contents of the memorandum, Dr. Bräuer stated that it was now necessary to make certain additions. The creation of a new Government was made a condition, and the German Government demanded that Major Quisling should be appointed Prime Minister and that his ministers should be the men he had chosen for his Government, possibly completed by a few other personalities.

King Haakon declared in agreement with the Foreign Minister that he could not appoint a Government which did not enjoy the confidence of the Norwegian people, and at several elections for the Storting it had been made entirely clear that Major Quisling did not enjoy sufficient confidence of the people. His Government in Norway would only become a new Kunsinen Government.

The Foreign Minister declared that the Nygaardsvold Government had declared themselves willing to resign, and he asked whether the German Government could not consider the creation of a friendly Government which could collaborate with Germany, composed of other persons than those mentioned. Dr. Bräuer declared that he was prepared to make concessions as to the membership of the Government, but that Herr Hitler insisted that Quisling must be Premier.

King Haakon finally said that he would submit the matter to his legal Government and that he must reserve his final reply till this was done. The German Minister emphasised the urgency of the decision, and it was agreed that when he returned south he would telephone to the Foreign Minister from Eidsvoll, as it was presumed that King Haakon would by then have been able to take the advice of his Government.

Some hours later in the evening the German Minister received in this way a reply to the effect that King Haakon could not appoint the Quisling Government. Dr. Bräuer asked whether this reply meant that the Norwegian resistance against the German invasion would continue and the Foreign Minister replied: "Yes, as long as possible."

The same evening the Government agreed upon a proclamation to the Norwegian people which was issued the following morning, and started the organisation of the military resistance against the attack. During the following days the Government had to move from place to place because they were pursued by German aeroplanes everywhere they settled and particularly on April 11th fierce bombardments took place in Trysil against King Haakon and the Government. The barbarous warfare the German authorities have thus started has compelled the Norwegian Government temporarily to conceal their residence. But the fight will be kept up, and the Government have been promised military help from the Allied Western Powers. They feel confident that in collaboration with these States they can save Norway for the Norwegian people.